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A LETTER  
TO  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
POOR LAW BOARD,  
ON  
WORKHOUSE INFIRMARIES.

BY  
LOUISA TWINING.

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1866.

# ST. LUKE'S HOME, FOR EPILEPTIC AND INCURABLE WOMEN,

AND FOR THE

Training of Ladies and Nurses in the Care of the Sick,

20, QUEEN SQUARE, BLOOMSBURY, W.C.

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Patients will be of two classes, paying not less than £25 and £50 a year. Those who are mentally affected cannot be received.

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Patients are not allowed to go out alone.

Should a patient become unfit for the Home, she must be removed by her friends.

Subscriptions and donations will be thankfully received by the Lady Superintendent, the Treasurer, and at MESSRS. TWININGS, 215, Strand, W.C.

Post Office Orders to be made payable at Lamb's Conduit Street.

*A Letter to the President of the  
Poor Law Board.*

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SIR,

The deep interest which I feel in the discussion that is at present being carried on with regard to the treatment of the sick and incurable in our Workhouses, is the only reason I shall offer for addressing to you the few thoughts and suggestions which this letter will contain ; this interest having led me during a period of thirteen years to think constantly upon the subject of our Workhouse poor, and to hope for measures of improvement in their condition.

I do not consider that in making these remarks I am wandering from the legitimate field of "women's work," or unduly intruding upon your department. For surely the care of the sick and helpless and aged is pre-eminently the duty of women, and should ever be their highest privilege and pleasure. To say, therefore, that we have no part or interest in this great question affecting the welfare of thousands of



the most helpless of our fellow-creatures, is simply to ignore the position which God has assigned to us in the world.

Though the objects of the "Workhouse Visiting Society," which was established eight years ago, were expressly the "moral and spiritual benefit" of the inmates, its ultimate and unavoidable result was to open the doors of Workhouses to a wider degree of visitation and interest than they had ever received before. To discover and reform abuses was not our aim and intention ; but entirely to separate the temporal from the moral and spiritual condition of the inmates we visited was impossible, and experienced and sympathising and intelligent visitors could not fail to receive impressions of facts, probably in a far truer and fuller degree than could be the case with any official visitor armed with the authority of the law : for in many instances the truth can only be known from constant intercourse with the inmates themselves.<sup>1</sup>

The Journal of our Society, of which thirty-two numbers were published in the course of six years, will bear witness to the interest taken by our visitors throughout the country in the inmates, as well as to their intelligent appreciation of the wants and deficiencies of these institutions. I allude to this fact merely to show that in now venturing to notice a few points concerning the management of the sick,

<sup>1</sup> I may add, there is much which it is only likely can be ascertained by *women*.

the subject is not an unknown one to us, nor the consideration of it quite without experience.

The recently formed Association for the Improvement of Workhouse Infirmaries may be said to have taken up the subject where it was left by our Society. As our workers were almost entirely women, and our objects were moral rather than physical, it became manifest that this part of the subject was one more especially fitted for the efforts of the medical profession ; and to their hands therefore we willingly resigned that portion of it at least which concerned the physical welfare of the sick.

But as I said before, we cannot remain altogether silent, or uninterested spectators of the great movement that is now going on ; and the experience of many years in visiting Workhouses, and acquaintance with the inmates as well as officials, may perhaps render the few remarks I have to make not quite unworthy of your attention.

It is hardly necessary to say that I have read with the deepest interest all the reports of the new Association, as well as those recently published by Mr. Farnall, and your medical officer, Dr. Edward Smith. With many of the defects and grievances enumerated in all these publications I have been long acquainted ; readers of the Journal will have noticed the hints which have been given from time to time of some of these deficiencies, as well as the suggestions for their remedy. I cannot but rejoice that the time has at length arrived for a complete exposure of a state of

things that could not have existed so long, had it been known or realized ; and my knowledge of circumstances which have come before me, compels me to say that I believe few, if any, of the statements have been exaggerated.

The remarks which I venture to make now, are concerned with the remedies proposed by the Association, as well as in the two official reports I have alluded to ; and they have to do principally, if not entirely, with the question of nursing. One remark made on this head by your medical officer leads me to notice that suggestion in particular. But before doing so, I may assume that on one point all are agreed without dissent,—viz., that the *exclusively Pauper Nurse system* must be abandoned. And I cannot write these words, implying a fact now so obvious and so universally recognised, without observing the surprising change of opinion that has taken place on this point. For years the evils have continued the same ; they have been spoken about, written against, but apparently all in vain. Eight years ago, the letter which I have ventured to reprint in the Appendix, was inserted in the *Times* ; from time to time other statements appeared, but the effort to draw attention to the subject seemed to be hopeless. Now, however, the difficulty is about to be solved, for the eyes are opened and the reason is convinced. I may perhaps be allowed to add, that this result is partly because visitors have seen and heard with their own senses, and have not only believed



from the reports of others. The fact that what are indeed large Hospitals cannot be managed<sup>2</sup> and nursed by the very class who are placed in them because of their incapacity and inability, is at length realised, and everywhere there is now arising a demand for other nurses who shall succeed them. Ten years ago the late Mrs. Jameson, with her wide experience of human nature and of life, both at home and abroad, wrote as follows of this system, and of the one defect she found in all our Workhouses,—“the want of a proper moral supervision.”

“Surely I may say there is a want of proper *moral* supervision where the most vulgar of human beings are set to rule over the most vulgar ; where the pauper is set to manage the pauper ; where the ignorant govern the ignorant ; where the aged and infirm minister to the aged and infirm ; where every softening and elevating influence is absent, or of rare occurrence, and every hardening and depraving influence continuous and ever at hand.”<sup>3</sup>

I need not follow her through her further description of Pauper Nurses, for the downfall of the system she so justly denounces is at hand ; but I desire most earnestly to repeat her statement and to express my own conviction, that the evil at the root of all others in our Workhouses, is the want of a *sufficient*

<sup>2</sup> I say *managed by* as well as nursed, because the matron's knowledge of what went on far out of her sight and hearing must have been an impossibility, and the power was really in the hands of these women.

<sup>3</sup> See “The Communion of Labour,” p. 111.

*moral supervision.* I would entreat your attention to this truth, for to undertake any reform that does not make this its foundation and stepping-stone, will be, I believe, to labour in vain and with a certain repetition of failure. I would the more earnestly endeavour to impress this, because there is now a great danger of our falling into the reactionary belief that *paid nurses* will be the panacea for all the evils of which we are complaining. But let us stop and well consider the proposal before we commit so fatal an error as to suppose that paid nurses alone, even could they be obtained of a class equal to those employed in Hospitals, can suffice for the management of the Workhouse Infirmaries, either of the present or the future. Let us consider the fact,—surely a remarkable one, as occurring simultaneously with the exposures and revelations from our *Workhouses*, that most of our voluntary *Hospitals* are now engaged in an endeavour to reform their system of nursing; that the generality of Hospital nurses are being found to be unfit and untrustworthy for their duties, *unsuperintended*, and that a higher and more responsible system of supervision is being eagerly sought for.<sup>4</sup>

Let us not, then, replace a failing system by one which, having been long tried, is found grievously wanting, and has been known to be so by all, apparently, except those official authorities in whose

<sup>4</sup> See a pamphlet just published, by Lord Josceline Percy, on Hospital Nurses. (Rivingtons.)



hands was the remedy. Eight <sup>5</sup> years ago, in a paper on "Workhouses and Women's Work," I said—"The evils of the employment of pauper nurses is dwelt upon by all who have considered the subject of Workhouse management. When we consider the persons to whom such extensive power and responsibility are intrusted, in the care of 50,000 sick persons <sup>6</sup> in the London Workhouses alone, we can hardly wonder at what is told of the results of the system. The only way in which an employment of the inmates could be successfully carried out would be under the constant supervision of superior persons; but in the present system that is an impossibility. Even then the nurses to be obtained would be, generally speaking, only the worn out remains of lives whose strength had been spent elsewhere. Efficient nurses, who could gain a living in any of our Hospitals, would not be likely to offer themselves for a post in which it is nearly all work of the hardest kind and no pay. Incapacitated in some way, either morally or physically, they are most likely to be. One of these nurses boldly stated that she had been sixteen times in the House of Correction, and she was not ashamed of it. She was a woman given to drink, and of a violent ungovernable temper, causing

<sup>5</sup> The same was said and many facts given, in a paper read before the first meeting of the Social Science Association at Birmingham, in 1857.

<sup>6</sup> This number is said to pass through the metropolitan Workhouses in one year.

great misery to the aged people under her control. Can these women be fit to attend on the sick, the infirm, and the dying? Of course such labour is cheap, and it is desirable, if possible, to employ those who must be maintained at the cost of the parish; but in no case should they be left with the sole charge and responsibility of sick wards, as they continually are at present, without any other control than the occasional visit of the matron, bestowed, at the utmost, once a day—in some cases, only once a week.” I give this extract merely to show that the revelations recently made are not new, and the testimony given by so many independent persons during so many years has surely great claim upon our attention.

And now, in conclusion, allow me to notice the remedies proposed for these acknowledged evils.

Dr. Edward Smith recommends that I and the ladies interested in Workhouses, should turn our attention to the training of some of the inmates themselves for the work of nursing.<sup>7</sup> Such a proposal was made more than ten years ago by one well qualified to judge of the need of good nursing—Dr. Sieveking. I believe it is also a suggestion of Mr. Farnall’s, that the girls from the district schools should be trained for this purpose. But I own that I cannot see any practical method of carrying out this plan. Of the able-bodied women (few indeed at the present time) in the Workhouses, it is sufficient to say that

<sup>7</sup> Page 57 of his Report.

they are the persons now employed as nurses ; the young and physically efficient ones *must* have morally defective characters—for it is well known that hardly any others resort to these institutions,—and to train the elderly women for this occupation would surely be a hopeless task. And then, with regard to the girls, their *age* must unfit them for any such employment. They leave the schools at sixteen for service, and no one would think they could be available amongst the sick under twenty years of age, at the soonest : how then could the interval be employed ? Once launched in service, it is hardly to be expected that they would return to the Workhouse as nurses ; not the most sanguine amongst us could entertain such a hope, and from my experience of between three and four hundred girls from Workhouses, I am quite sure it would be impossible to retain them for this kind of work. Of course it may be possible and desirable to employ the inmates in all the menial work of the Hospitals, where no responsibility is involved, but that can only be safely done under the circumstances which I am about to suggest.

What, then, is the remedy which seems to offer a hope for the evils we have been dwelling upon ? Most earnestly, most emphatically, I would endeavour to impress upon all who have power and influence in this matter, that the one hopeful remedy is, a *higher and constant supervision by educated, conscientious, and responsible women*. I have repeated these words so constantly during the last ten years that I fear



they must have become wearisome to hearers and readers ; but every year's experience has only served to deepen my conviction of their truth.

And I do not intend to enter into any details of the proposed plans of reform, except as they touch upon and are connected with this one point. But in this view it is vitally connected with the question of separate Hospitals.<sup>8</sup> For infirmaries or sick wards united with and forming part of *Workhouses*, such a superintendence as I contemplate it will be impossible to obtain ; for, as at present constituted, the master and matron over the general household must be supreme : and, as is well remarked by Dr. E. Smith, there cannot be a divided authority in one house. *Workhouses*, so called, *must* be associated with all the long prevalent ideas of the pauper class,<sup>9</sup> and it will be impossible ever so far to dissociate

<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to understand the objections that have been raised to this proposal, the principle of which is identical with that of district schools, and was originally suggested by the new Poor Law. To place four or five different institutions under one roof and one management can only produce the results we are now deploring, and to separate them is the only hope of obtaining a supervision suitable for each department. But I cannot refrain from expressing an earnest hope that the large size of the Hospitals may not render the oversight I contemplate an impossibility.

<sup>9</sup> We who live as it were in the midst of this discussion, can hardly realize the still very general feeling existing in the minds of many, especially in the country, by whom it is constantly repeated that "anything is good enough for paupers," who are apparently still supposed to be "the sturdy and lazy beggars" of Queen Elizabeth's time.

them as to make them *Hospitals*, as in every consideration of justice and humanity they should be.

We may, with some hope of success, call upon women of education and a high sense of duty to come forward to aid us in this great work of caring for the sick and afflicted in *Hospitals*; but not to act under the present matrons, or form a part of the existing machinery of *Workhouses*, where all characters, and vices, and classes, are mixed together in one indiscriminate depôt.

On the details and expenses of the plan suggested I am not going to enter; but I may be allowed to remark that any superintendence that is not the best is wasteful and extravagant, and that the presence, and influence, and oversight of a few persons of real integrity and authority would be far more economical than the employment of many of a lower grade.

Most earnestly, therefore, do I trust that the claims of the sick and incurable may be considered apart from all other classes of the inmates, for whom indeed not more indulgence, but far stricter discipline and treatment is as urgently called for.

Lastly, should such a plan be carried out, my aim and endeavour will be to induce women, such as I have alluded to, to come forward for this work; believing that no higher or more stirring call of duty can there be for our countrywomen, than to assist in reforming some of those national Institutions of which we are so ready to boast, and to aid in succouring the most helpless and afflicted of our fellow-



creatures. Should these words meet the eye of any who have the will and the power thus to devote themselves to this great work and labour of love, I would say that any help I can give in the way of training or encouragement will be most gladly afforded. In this Home there is opportunity for a few to prepare themselves for their duties, and such I am now seeking.<sup>10</sup> Surely they will not be wanting at this our country's call and emergency, for no nobler field of employment can be offered. And may no unworthy prejudices or jealousies interfere with the harmonious and hearty co-operation of all classes in the accomplishment of this most urgent and sacred work of reform, which I earnestly trust and pray you may be enabled to carry out.

Your obedient Servant,

LOUISA TWINING.

*St. Luke's Home,*

*20, Queen Square, W.C.*

*July 23, 1866.*

<sup>10</sup> I will not enter upon the question of paid or voluntary labourers, except to say that, in my opinion, to the work itself it can make no difference, and that *both* will be welcome if they can give us earnest and efficient help.



## APPENDIX.

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### WORKHOUSE NURSES.

(*A Letter to the "Times," 1858.*)

"AN effort is now being made, I may almost say throughout the country, to improve and elevate the character of hospital nurses. It is felt that £8 or £10 a year is hardly sufficient remuneration for one who would fill such an office of labour and responsibility. We are beginning to try to inspire them with a sense of the importance and dignity of their vocation ; and their welfare and comfort are considered and cared for, both morally and physically, as it should be, when we remember the vast influence these women exercise over the bodies and souls under their care.

"But what has been done, or is now doing, about that large class of nurses who tend the most destitute and helpless of our suffering fellow-creatures—viz., those in our workhouses? I would but mention a fact brought forward by one who closely investigated the statistics of this strangely neglected subject :—

" 'The number of inmates under medical treatment in the year 1854 in the London workhouses was over 50,000, omitting one workhouse. There are seventy paid nurses, and five hundred pauper nurses and assistants. One half of these nurses are above fifty, one quarter above sixty, many not less than seventy, and some more than eighty years old.'

"Then, let us look for a moment at the duties of these nurses. There is generally one nurse and a helper to each ward, sometimes containing fifteen or twenty patients. The nurse sleeps in it and lives in it, whether the patients are men or women. In cases under my own knowledge, she may be said to be at work almost equally during the twenty-four hours, for who else is to tend the sick and dying sufferers by night? During the cold nights of winter, as well as the hot and exhausting nights of summer, she is up and down continually after one or another ; and with no prospect of a

change, for no sooner does one sufferer depart than another fills the vacant bed. For work like this, which one would conceive could only be performed from the very highest motives of duty and devotion, she receives often only the house diet, perhaps a meat dinner daily, and an allowance of beer and gin; in many cases not even what would be valued more than anything, dry tea, but only that which is boiled in the general cauldron and served out to the inmates. I do not say that these regulations are universal, but they are general, and masters and matrons of workhouses own their difficulties and lament hopelessly over them.

“But, it may be said, such persons and such remuneration are good enough for such places and patients as have to be tended. Let us go into this ward and visit some of these patients. There are probably many who have been rejected from the neighbouring hospitals as incurable, but tenderly treated while there,—such as the friendless girl fading away in a lingering consumption, or with a heart complaint, which may last for months, and the worn-out workwoman who has toiled on till eyes and strength failed, and who by no possibility could have saved enough for declining years of sickness. Here are all those, in short, both young and old (and they are numerous), who have no homes where they can be nursed. I have known such sufferers who never left their beds for years,—I have known them tended at their deaths by drunken nurses. The women who are set over wards full of helpless sufferers drink whenever they can obtain the means, for they come not to this, the lowest office which a worn-out woman can fill, till all other chances of subsistence are gone. I know that if a good and decent woman is occasionally found to fill this office she will not long remain in it, and the rejoicing of the poor patients is speedily turned into mourning, for to be the lowest scrubber in any hospital is esteemed a higher post than to be nurse with the sole charge of a workhouse ward, and none will fill it who can live elsewhere. I have before alluded to ‘many dark places in this difficult subject,’ but I believe there are few which may not be enlightened by the aid of kindly interest and counsel, given, not as censure, but in that spirit of earnest and friendly sympathy which now leads me to offer a few simple suggestions, which might avail as remedies for a state of things which I would not willingly believe we are content shall remain as it is.

“I am not going to propose that Guardians or rate-payers shall be called upon to supply a staff of nurses throughout our unions



with high wages and first-rate professional attainments; even this, alone, would not cure all the evils we complain of. I would not willingly propose anything which would increase the already heavy burden of the rates. Of course it is right and desirable to keep out of our unions all who are not obliged by necessity to enter, among whom we should number only those who are either morally or physically incapable of gaining their own living. But can we act upon this principle when we require persons to fill offices of responsibility and trust? If the duties of nurses are to be performed by inmates, surely we cannot expect to exclude all but the most infirm and helpless? Now, there may be many persons, widows or friendless, of respectable character, who for the sake of a home and a provision might be willing to undertake the charge of the sick and infirm, if the post of a nurse were made one of comfort, respected and honoured as it should be, even in a workhouse. And in the hope of effecting this, I would suggest that the pauper dress of nurses should be everywhere exchanged for a neat and uniform costume, which in itself would help to raise the office in the estimation of their patients: then, that we should exact no more from the nurse in a workhouse than from one in a hospital, the duties being in many cases identically the same; that proper opportunities of rest (especially at night), and for taking air and exercise, should be granted; and, above all, that the food should be sufficient, nourishing, and palatable, with such supplies of hot tea and coffee, especially at night, as should do away with all necessity and excuse for the stimulating, but most injurious, drink which is now thought essential to the performance of a nurse's work. Few of us, indeed, know how arduous and often revolting are its duties. Yet many would be ready to serve on these terms, or with the addition of a small remuneration,—many, who yet would not be deemed sufficient for the requirements of a large and wealthy hospital.\*

Lastly, I would say, that if we expect our poor to be treated with that respect which is due to every human being, to every fellow-Christian more especially, we must show that we who have power and influence in our hands do not despise them or consider

\* Surely one object of the lady visitors might be to endeavour to influence the nurses, perhaps by assembling them for reading and advice, whereby they might be encouraged to a right performance of their important duties. Many of them have not even the opportunity allowed them of attending the chapel services, and the Sunday passes like all other days to them.



them beneath our care ; we must not consign them to the ministrations of nurses such as I have described, without showing that we feel for them and go among them with the consolations of charity and sympathy,—sympathy not only for the patients but for the nurses also.

“And if such facts as I have alluded to are not known or believed by all those who contribute their portion to the maintenance of our destitute poor, I would ask, in all earnestness, that gentlemen should come forward and see these things for themselves,—should, as Guardians, take a part (as, thank God, they are here and there beginning to do now), not only in wisely and economically administering the vast funds of our Poor Law machinery, but also in providing such care for the bodies and souls of the helpless and destitute as may prevent it ever being said of us, as once of a people of old, that we were ‘a shameless nation, who neither revered old man nor pitied child.’

“A VISITOR.”

EXTRACTS FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
POOR RELIEF (ENGLAND)—1861.

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MISS L. TWINING'S EVIDENCE.

CHAIRMAN.—I believe that your society has given some attention to a class of inmates in the Workhouse called destitute incurables ; in what way have you proceeded with respect to those persons ?—There is a pamphlet on the table containing the plan we have proposed.

Do you wish to put in that pamphlet, and to have it annexed to your evidence ?—Just as you please ; if you think it would make our proposal any clearer I should wish to do so.

Can you state, shortly, in what way you would deal with those cases ; I suppose that applies only to cases in which the society is allowed to visit ?—Yes.

Do you inquire into the mode in which they are treated medically ?—I think we have the means of knowing how they are treated, but it is not so much their medical treatment as those comforts which are not medical comforts, that we desire to afford them.

You assume, I suppose, that these persons are afflicted with some incurable malady ?—Yes.

And is it generally the case in Workhouses that there are a certain number of such persons ?—Yes, there are large numbers of them. I may say, as a rule, that all those who are turned out of the London hospitals as incurables, go to the Workhouses to die.

Is a ward set apart for them ?—No, not in any instance that I know of.

Are they mixed with the others who are sick and infirm ?—They are mixed with the sick and infirm ; they are not always in the sick wards, but they are often among the infirm.

Do you find that there is not attention paid to them, and that supposing they want anything specially suited to their particular

malady, on an application being made to the Guardians or medical officers they do not receive it?—There is no question that they are less well off than they are in the hospitals they leave.

But is there, in your opinion, any indisposition on the part of the Guardians to attend to those people?—No ; I think the Guardians are very kindly disposed towards them, but I do not think that it is in the power or capacity of Guardians to understand such matters as those.

How does the Society act in those cases ; do they apply generally to all those who are in that state, or do they make a selection from those who are destitute and incurable?—That was our proposal but it was made only a short time ago, so that we have hardly had the plan carried out in any instance. We have about seven different Unions in correspondence with us about the plan, and I believe that it has been agreed to and partly carried out, but I am not in a position to mention the exact arrangements that have been made.

How would the selection be made?—Would you say that one out of three persons who were destitute and incurable should have comforts?—It would apply to all destitute incurables in the Workhouse. Our suggestion was that all the incurable cases in one Workhouse should be classed together, and that of course must be done entirely in co-operation with the medical man.

And it is so, is it not?—As far as we have gone there has been the co-operation of the Guardians, the medical man, and the lady visitors.

Have you induced the Guardians in any case to give these incurables separate wards?—We have given grants of money to assist different Unions in the country.

And have they received that money and applied it in the way you have directed?—I have reason to believe that they have always, in co-operation with lady visitors. They have selected either some articles of furniture or some other comforts.

Is there any one respect in which you found that their comforts are unattended to?—You have mentioned furniture, is that one of the comforts to which you refer?—Yes, I think that the beds, generally speaking, are very defective for persons who are in the last stage of illness.

When ladies are allowed to visit these Workhouses, if they found that a bed was not suited to a particular invalid, do you think that the Guardians would be displeased if they made a communication to them, and that they would not attend to that communication?



—I do not think they would like it if it involved any considerable expense. That was the reason for our offering to supply these things voluntarily. We thought that that was the only chance of assisting those poor people in the way we desired.

When that has been done, has it been in connection with the medical attendant?—Yes, entirely.

Is this one of the rules which is proposed by your society : “That in every Workhouse, persons suffering from acute and distressing diseases, such as dropsy, consumption, or cancer, shall be placed in wards especially allotted to them, to be called the wards for male and female incurables?—Yes.

Did you ever make any application, or has any application been made to your knowledge, to any Board of Guardians, to have a separate ward for such persons?—Yes ; we have applied to all the Boards of Guardians in England, and the general answer that we have received from many of the London Boards has been that there is no room for any such classification of the sick.

Are you aware of any instance in the country in which such an application has been attended to?—Yes ; we have had favourable answers from several who have said that they were considering the plan, or that they will consider it. I have stated that we have given grants to seven different unions in order to carry out that plan.

It would involve some alteration in the buildings, I suppose, if they were required to have a separate ward for these persons?—No, I think not ; it would be merely separating those who are already mixed up in different wards, so that aid might be given to them without creating general jealousy.

But these incurable disorders are not confined to one or two persons, and you would propose to put all those who are incurable into one ward!—Yes ; they would require more space, of course, because the present wards are generally so crowded that it would be almost impossible to collect any number of sick persons in them.

Do you say that, generally speaking, the sick wards are very crowded?—In the London Workhouses, I think there can be no doubt about it.

Do you speak from having visited them yourself?—Yes ; I have visited almost all the London Workhouses—all but four ; and I have seen between thirty and forty in the country.

And do you give the same character of all of them, that their

sick wards are overcrowded?—Some of the larger and more modern houses are much better than the old ones.

Have you ever communicated with any of the medical attendants of Workhouses with reference to this plan?—Yes, I have.

Do you find that they agree in the view you have stated, that the sick wards are overcrowded?—Some are quite aware that their Workhouses are overcrowded.

Would they deny that the effect of that is to retard the cure of persons who are sick?—I think that they cannot deny that. I have been through Workhouses with physicians who have sometimes expressed their astonishment that people ever get well, or live, in such a crowded atmosphere. It is as different from what it is in hospitals as can be.

Besides the crowding, is the ventilation defective?—In many of the old Workhouses it is quite impossible for it to be otherwise.

Does your society claim to visit the sick, to administer to them relief, and to introduce whatever may tend to alleviate their sufferings?—Yes.

Are they allowed to introduce diet into the Workhouse?—Visitors have taken things occasionally, but not on any system at all.

The Guardians have not objected to that?—No, I think they are quite aware that the visitors go to those with whom they are acquainted, and who are likely to be the most deserving persons in the Workhouse; it is not as if it was given indiscriminately, so as to encourage the worst characters.

That which has been described is part of the plan of the Visiting Society, so far as regards this class of persons, is it not?—Yes, certainly.

Do you think that this plan could be carried out generally in Workhouses?—I cannot see any difficulty in it, where there are already committees or lady visitors appointed.

Supposing there were several societies, do you think that they could each visit the sick wards, and that they could each administer to the sick according to their view of what was needed?—Certainly not. I think there must be organization in every such plan. The visitors must be limited, and whatever is done must be done strictly in co-operation with the authorities.

Would you say that one society must be exclusively allowed to attend one Workhouse?—I do not see that it need be limited to a so-called society. If the visitors were known and numbered, and



if the Guardians and officials knew who they were, I do not see that there could be any difficulty in it.

But still, you would not allow two societies who were not in accord, or who had not an understanding with each other, both to visit the same sick wards?—I think that the Guardians could not permit it.

Therefore, there must be some distinct arrangement made by the authorities at the Workhouse as to who they would allow to visit the sick?—Decidedly.

I presume that some Guardians would think that the arrangement is carried out already by the medical officer they appoint?—Yes, I suppose so.

Have you ever found any Guardians who admitted that their arrangements were defective?—We had answers from several who said they were much obliged by our suggestions, and that they would endeavour to carry them out, and that led to their making improvements; some have accepted our help, and others have said that they are quite willing to carry out our suggestions themselves.

But you do not state that to have been generally the case?—No. We have had already answers from between fifty and sixty Boards of Guardians.

Have they ever stated that other persons, besides the society with which you are connected, have applied also to visit the poor in the Workhouses?—I do not think they have stated that: many Workhouses have been visited independently of our society, in the country especially.

By distinct Visiting Societies?—No; it has been more by individuals; by ladies living in the neighbourhood, who are interested in the inmates.

Might not the treatment clash if persons who do not know exactly how they were to act, were both to visit?—It must be strictly under the care of the medical officer, I think; nothing must be done without his co-operation.

I presume you are practically acquainted with what does occur in Workhouses, and with the fact that there are some persons who visit them for the purpose of giving the inmates religious instruction?—Yes.

You do not interfere with that at all?—No; I never heard an objection of that kind made during all this time.

But you are of opinion that something is due to the maintenance of order in the house, however benevolent the intentions of the



persons may be who propose to introduce a system of discipline or teaching peculiarly their own?—Decidedly; the object of the society is, that everything should be done under authority, and in order.

But you would admit, would you not, that there is some difficulty in the Guardians giving a general assent to benevolent persons who, with the best objects in the world, may differ as to the mode of carrying them out, having free access to the poor in Workhouses?—I think so; I think that the number must be limited, and that the persons must be known.

You do not ascribe it to hard-heartedness, or to any indifference on the part of the Guardians, if they do not at once admit the visits of all ladies who seek to attend the Workhouse for benevolent purposes, such as those you have described?—No.

MR. WALPOLE.—Out of the fifty or sixty Workhouses to which you have proposed to offer assistance, have you had many refusals?—For the most part they have said they would consider the subject, and some of them have said that they would adopt part of the plan.

They postponed the consideration of it rather than refused to entertain it?—Yes.

CHAIRMAN.—You are aware, are you not, that sick inmates of Workhouses are wholly in the hands of the medical officer?—Yes.

Do you know the extent of his powers?—I am quite aware what his powers are, but I think that very few medical officers venture to give all that they consider necessary.

Are you aware that he has it in his power to give directions and make suggestions as to the diet, classification and treatment of sick paupers?—Yes.

So that he may direct such diet for any individual pauper as he may deem necessary, and that it is his duty to do this, and also to report to the Guardians any defect which he may observe in the arrangements of the infirmary, and in the performance of their duties by the nurses of the sick?—Yes.

Would not the society then consider that the best course for them to adopt in these visitations would be to make their complaints to the medical officer?—I do not think that the Guardians would like that; it would appear to be an interference between them and their medical officers; I do not think it would do to attempt it in that way.

You would not consider it practicable for persons to apply to the Guardians independently of the medical officer?—No.

Or to suggest any mode of treatment that he did not sanction?—No.

As he has full power to adopt any mode of treatment that is suggested to him, is he in your opinion the right person to consult in the first place?—I think so; he should certainly be consulted first, or at the same time as the Guardians.

Has he any interest in not giving the fullest directions for the comfort as well as the succour of the sick inmates?—If it involved any considerable expense, it would be a very unpopular thing for any medical officer to be ordering the little alleviations which we propose to give, although they may appear to be mere trifles.

Are you aware of the circumstances under which medical officers now act in the Workhouses, and whether they are entirely dependent on the Guardians?—I am quite aware what their power is, but I think it is very easy to see how unpopular a medical officer would become if he were to go beyond what he perhaps considered necessary for a sick person.

But do they admit to the society that the treatment is necessarily imperfect, owing to the arrangements in the Workhouse itself?—I suppose that those who have admitted the reasonableness of our suggestions, may be assumed to admit that, in their opinion, there is some deficiency in their own method of treatment.

But are you aware of any instance, in which a medical officer has admitted the propriety of a suggestion which has been made to him, and yet has been apprehensive of making himself unpopular by making a representation of it to the Guardians?—I do not think I could name any particular instance of that kind at this moment, but I feel quite sure that it is a very prevalent feeling.

You are aware that the medical officer is now appointed for life?—Yes.

Did you ever meet with any reluctance on the part of any medical officer to the appointment being for life, and he being independent in that respect of the Guardians, to adopt any suggestions that you offered to him, if he thought them proper?—I cannot say; we have not made the suggestions directly to the medical officer, but when we go into the Workhouse wards, and see that none of these things are supplied, we can only judge that the medical officer does not think himself at liberty to suggest them; that is the conclusion at which I arrive.



Are the suggestions which are made always the result of some previous communications with other medical officers?—I am not aware to what suggestions you allude.

You spoke just now of some suggestions for the better treatment of people who are sick and incurable, and you spoke of some reluctance on the part of medical officers to act on those suggestions: I now ask you whether those suggestions, having reference rather to the medical treatment of the inmates, are the result of previous communications by ladies of your society with some other medical officer?—I think that the ladies who wrote the pamphlet which now lies on the table before the Committee, had been in communication with other medical men.

But with the best intentions to relieve the sick and incurable, they may not know the best way of doing it; the medical officer may be the best judge as to the treatment which should be pursued, may he not?—As regards medical treatment, no doubt; but the matters to which we allude are things about which women know far more than Boards of Guardians are likely to know, and they are things which might not even occur to a medical man.

MR. WALPOLE.—You have mentioned supplying beds to the sick, where beds affording sufficient comfort are not provided for them in the Workhouse?—Yes.

In the cases in which that was done was it done in co-operation with the medical officer?—Yes.

And did he immediately assent to your proposition as being a reasonable one?—Yes, entirely; and we have made grants upon that.

CHAIRMAN.—I think you referred to an opinion expressed by physicians, that they wondered how people ever got cured in such wards as those in which they are placed?—Yes; I have heard that expression made use of by a physician who has visited them with me.

LORD ROBERT CECIL.—You have several physicians on the visiting committee, have you not?—Yes.

CHAIRMAN.—Are you prepared to make any suggestions for an improvement of the present system besides that of allowing ladies to visit the Workhouses?—At the very beginning of everything, it seems to me that the appointment of a better class of nurses is absolutely necessary. I should be very sorry to lose this opportunity of expressing my strong opinion upon that point. I think that if our Workhouses are to be hospitals for those who are incurable,



and who are turned out of our best London hospitals, the care and attention they receive should be something superior to that which is now rendered to them by the pauper women who attend them.

Do you say that the nurses do not conduct themselves properly?—They are pauper nurses, who are utterly unfit for the care of such cases as they have, generally speaking, to treat.

Do you mean that they have no medical knowledge, or that they have no care for the poor?—I say that in the generality of instances they have neither the capacity, the physical power, or the moral training to fit them to be nurses.

COLONEL PENNANT.—Are these nurses inmates of the Workhouses?—Yes, always.

CHAIRMAN.—Are they paid for their attendance?—They are paid nothing, but they have superior diet, and get rewards of that sort.

COLONEL PENNANT.—Are they very commonly drunken women?—I suppose there is not a medical officer who does not feel that the trial of his work is the women he has to carry out his orders.

Have you ever conveyed any remonstrance to the Guardians of any Union on the subject?—One of our proposed grants was to pay for a nurse, for it is the payment that is objected to by the Guardians. One of the objects proposed by our society was to pay for the services of efficient nurses.

MR. LYALL.—The chief nurse is not a pauper, is she?—I know a number of London Workhouses in which there is not any paid nurse at all.

CHAIRMAN.—An offer you say was made on the part of the society to pay for a nurse, and that offer was declined?—No, the offer was accepted.

MR. WALPOLE.—Does the nurse still continue there?—I am not sure; the last I heard upon that subject was that one was being sought for.

But you would still have to supply funds for that purpose?—I do not think that our central society would; I think that when we had started the plan the local visitors would meet any permanent expenses.

CHAIRMAN.—Would you suggest that, besides the nurses being better paid they should not be pauper inmates?—I think that it might be quite as well to use the women in the house as far as they could be used, provided that they were properly superintended; but it appears to me to be most important that there should be one

efficient and trained person at least to superintend these pauper women. I do not know how many Workhouses there are in London without a paid nurse at all, but I know that the number is very large, and that the matron and these women are the sole superintendents of the wards, which are exactly like hospital wards.

And are you decidedly of opinion that the cure of the sick people is retarded by the want of proper attention on the part of the nurses?—I think there can be no question about that.

Therefore it is bad economy on the part of the Guardians not to take more care of their sick?—I cannot help thinking that they would get well quicker if they had better nurses, setting aside the humanity part of the question.

Are you aware of any Union in which a better system prevails?—Where there is a paid nurse to superintend the other nurses, it cannot be supposed that the same evils would occur.

Have you ever visited any Workhouse in which there was a paid superintendent?—I have visited several: but where I go constantly there is no paid nurse at all: and I know that most Workhouses are without any paid nurses; and there is no one between the matron and the pauper women; in fact, there is no paid woman in the house, except the matron.

Are they, generally speaking, elderly women?—Yes.

COLONEL PENNANT.—Do you find, from your own observation, that these nurses in the sick wards are frequently changed?—They are changed very frequently; and on account of their drunkenness, they are dismissed.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Can you suggest to us any remedy for what you consider to be the inadequate consideration for the wants and necessities of women in Workhouses generally?—I consider that a greater supervision by women would be the only remedy for it; I think that women should be allowed to take a greater part in the management (if I may so say) of Workhouses, and in the inspection of them. It appears to me that if there could be a woman inspector (whether from any central body or locally would, in my opinion, make no difference), or if there could be somebody to share the responsibility of the matron, that would be the only plan to improve either household details, or the management of the women and children.

Do you conceive that under the present system the matron is left without any real supervision or control?—I think that one matron alone being in authority is able to deceive a body of gentle-



men in a way she could not do if ladies had the inspection as well.

I understand your main point to be, that the peculiarities in the position of women in such an establishment is such, that they cannot be properly inspected except by women?—I think it is quite impossible for any body of Guardians, however well disposed they may be, visiting the house once a week, or once a fortnight, to see into those matters which would properly come under the inspection of women both as regards household matters, management, and many other things, which it is peculiarly within the province of women to manage.

You think that with the best intentions on the part of the Guardians, they might be deceived as to the conduct of the matron, and as to the general treatment of women and children in the Workhouse, if it were the interest of the matron to do so?—I think so, certainly; and the same remark exactly applies to district schools. I have heard the matron of one of the large district schools express her desire to have the co-operation and assistance of ladies in a superior position; the clothing, the management of the servants, the general arrangement of the household, and everything in short, she said, came upon her, subject to a reference to the Guardians or managers on the occasion of their visits. She said herself, how much better it would be if she could consult (I do not like to call it a committee, because the word “committee” is so much disliked) a number of ladies who might co-operate with her as to the dress of the girls, the fit age for them to go out to service, and a hundred different matters, which I imagine are infinitely better in the hands of women than of men of whatever class they may be. I think that ladies being associated with the matron, and having the opportunity of consulting with the Guardians, would be able to do very much of the actual supervision; and if an objection be made to the cost of having a superior class of paid persons, I think that a great deal might be done by means of voluntary visitation for the benefit of the women and children without any cost at all.

CHAIRMAN.—Will you explain, if you please, how, practically, a voluntary visitation by ladies with a view to assist the matron in the discharge of her duties could be carried out?—I think there is the nucleus of a plan, supposing it to be carried out to the full extent, when a certain number of ladies, sanctioned and authorized by the Guardians, are invited to make remarks and suggestions on



the management of the Workhouse ; that would be all that would be necessary.

Would these persons have any responsibility as regarded what they said or did ?—I think they would, decidedly.

When you speak of voluntary assistance, you do not define the number of persons to be occupied in that way, or the nature of their duties ?—When I speak of their assistance being voluntary, I mean, that they should not be paid officials.

But you recommend that there should be some arrangement under which certain persons would assist those in authority ?—Yes ; the number would depend on the size of the house ; I think that a certain number of ladies might be sanctioned and appointed by the Guardians.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Would you prefer, if you could get it, to have a paid woman as an inspector, who should be responsible in the same way as a male inspector is responsible ?—I think that the two would be perfectly compatible ; there might be one authorized inspector, a woman, with the authority of the central Board, in the same way as there are inspectors at present.

Has your experience shown you that the physical condition of women and children in Workhouses is such, that their health and comfort cannot be properly regulated by men ?—I have no doubt at all about that ; with regard to the clothing of children particularly, I have not the slightest doubt that it would be much better if the opinions of women were taken.

And what would you say with regard to their health ?—I would apply the same remark to the physical and moral treatment of women and children ; indeed of the household generally.

CHAIRMAN.—Can you state precisely, what is the system which is now adopted, and what it is that determines either the clothing or the treatment generally of the female inmates of a Workhouse ; is it totally independent of any previous consultations or advice given by matrons or others ?—I imagine it is entirely in the hands of each individual matron, who of course consults with the Guardians, because nothing can be done without their authority.

Is it left to the discretion of any person who happens for the time being to be the matron, or is there any system with respect to the clothing, diet, or treatment generally of female inmates ?—I suppose there is ; but all that has been done, I imagine, entirely without the co-operation of women.

Is that your idea ?—Yes.

And you find fault with the system on that account?—Yes; I think that their opinion has neither been taken originally nor subsequently in detail, and that in a great measure these details are in the hands of each individual matron; it depends very much, I think, on who the matron is; she may make anything appear to the Guardians; they cannot be judges in these matters; and when we consider the class of persons from among whom matrons are generally taken, I do consider it a very serious matter that the welfare of hundreds of people in an institution such as a Workhouse should be in the hands of one woman.

I suppose you find every variety of system in the different Workhouses you visit?—I think it is usually in the hands of one paid matron.

You think that the clothing is very defective as regards the female inmates, and you say that the whole of the arrangements depend on the accidental character or disposition of the particular matron in each particular Workhouse, and, therefore, I presume, you find different systems in different places?—I think that a good matron is always able to make many valuable suggestions.

Have you any objection to go a little more into detail, and to state, as regards the clothing of children, what it is that you think is defective at present?—I was alluding especially to the clothing of children in schools; I have heard and seen many things which I considered defective in detail—things which would naturally occur to women, but which could not possibly occur to Guardians inspecting schools and Workhouses so seldom as they do; with regard to sanitary matters, such as cleanliness, ventilation, washing, and so on, it is, I think, obvious that women would go much better into details than men could.

Is not the medical officer consulted upon those matters?—I think not. I should think that the medical officer has more than enough to do with the actual medical attendance that he is obliged to give.

LORD STANLEY.—You propose that there should be to each Workhouse two or three ladies who should act, and who should be unpaid, but who could not act without the sanction of the Guardians?—Yes.

And you would propose that they should co-operate with the matron?—Yes.

Would they give the matron orders, or would they be under her orders, and would they be free to come in and go out at all hours, or would you have them report to the Guardians upon the conduct



of the matron, or what would be the special functions with which you would entrust them?—A great deal of that would be regulated by each individual Board of Guardians. I think that the matron would feel that there was some check upon her if she knew that the ladies would have to report on what they saw in the Workhouse. It would be quite useless if they had not the authority of the Guardians to report what they saw.

Then the ladies would have to report to the Guardians the conduct of the matron?—If you like to put it in that way. I would rather say that they would have to report on the general management of the house. I think that suggestions made by competent persons should be carried out by the matron and Guardians ; I do not wish to put it in an offensive manner towards the matrons ; I simply think that it would be a great comfort and assistance to a matron to feel that she had that co-operation. I am quite sure that it would be so to a right-minded person ; and if a matron disliked it, it would be because she knew that her conduct would not bear investigation.

Do you not think there would be some danger of an uncomfortable feeling arising between a matron who was officially responsible for the performance of her own duties within the house and these ladies?—I think not ; I do not think from what I have seen, that there would be the least difficulty in it. Supposing the matron to be a fit person for her situation, I believe it would be both desired and appreciated by her.

You would not give to those ladies any executive authority?—No, I think not ; I think that the elected Guardians must always be the chief persons.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Would you object to these ladies being elected as Guardians?—I believe it is perfectly right that there should be some ladies as Guardians.

As the law stands at present?—Yes ; and I should not see the least reason against two or three ladies acting as Guardians ; they would not interfere with the gentlemen's province ; and I am sure that immense mischief has arisen from men interfering in the province of women with regard to matters as to which they cannot be proper judges.

Have you ever conversed with or taken the opinion of any officials on the subject of there being lady inspectors?—Several gentlemen have said to me that they consider it would be very desirable that there should be women inspectors.



Do you think that, practically, there would be any difficulty in having a certain number of ladies elected as Guardians ; have you ever inquired into the matter ; and if so, have you found that there would be any popular objection to it ?—I do not know that I have ever mentioned the subject to any Guardians, or that they are aware of the proposition.

I take it for granted that you would divide the labour of superintending the house, and of administering relief, and that that part of the labour which applied to female paupers you would leave to lady Guardians ?—I think that if two or three ladies could be elected as Guardians, there would be no difficulty in their inspecting the Workhouse.

That would perhaps avoid the necessity of appointing lady inspectors ?—Yes.

I understood you to say, that you would recommend the appointment of female inspectors, whose duties should be the same as the duties of the inspectors who are at present appointed under the Poor Law ?—Really, I do not think there is much to choose between the different suggestions ; so long as women had a voice in the matter, I would not care how it was done, whether by a local body or by central inspectors.

Do you think from anything you have observed that there would be any difficulty in finding ladies ready to accept the office, supposing them to be chosen in the same way as other Guardians are ?—I think not ; I think that whenever people are wanted for any particular work, they are always to be found ; that is the result of my experience.

LORD ROBERT CECIL.—Do you think that the ratepayers would be very willing to elect ladies ?—I am not aware whether public opinion has as yet advanced sufficiently far.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Are you aware that in some places ladies have acted as Guardians ?—I have heard that it is perfectly legal for them to do so, but I am not aware of its having been done.

Diet is one of the matters with respect to which it is said that medical men have great power ; and that brings me to another point on which I should be glad to say something with regard to the medical inspection of Workhouses. The whole is left at present in the hands of one medical man ; and if our Workhouses are now chiefly hospitals for the aged, infirm, and sick, I do think that there

should be some medical inspection, and that there should be something more than one medical practitioner.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Do you think that his position is not sufficiently responsible?—I think that he is perfectly unchecked as to what he may do or suggest, except as far as the Guardians are concerned; and, as I have said before, I do not consider that they can be judges of the wants of such a class of persons.

Is there not, at present, any sanitary inspection of Workhouses?—I am not aware that there is any.

CHAIRMAN.—At present a medical man is appointed to attend the sick, and there is no dietary settled that has not been submitted to him, and upon which he has reported. You are not satisfied with that system; but who would you suggest as a better judge of what is a fit dietary for people in a Workhouse than the medical man?—I would suggest a medical inspection of Workhouses by medical men, or the appointment of a paid medical inspector. I do not in the least care how it is done; I think that medical inspection is most desirable.

You would have a medical inspector appointed to see that the medical man does his duty?—I would have him report upon everything connected with sanitary and medical matters.

LORD STANLEY.—You would have one inspector appointed to visit a large number of these Workhouses periodically, and to report on the state of each house in regard to its physical or sanitary condition?—Or, I would have a visitation by honorary medical men locally.

But honorary medical men would be unpaid?—Yes.

And being unpaid they would be irresponsible?—I think there should be either a paid medical inspector, or a visitation of Workhouses by honorary medical men.

LORD ROBERT CECIL.—Might not medical men visit Workhouses as they at present visit hospitals?—That is another suggestion. If they could visit Workhouses, as they do hospitals at present with their pupils, I believe that it would be a very great check upon the mischiefs which at present go on. I cannot see what disadvantage could result from it; it is said that there is now very great difficulty in medical men studying those long chronic and incurable cases, which end in death, and which are turned out of hospitals, and if medical men were permitted to visit Workhouses as they do hospitals, they would have a more favourable opportunity of seeing such cases than they can have anywhere else.



MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Do the present medical officers of Workhouses take pupils?—I believe not ; I have heard of their having assistants, but I never heard of their taking pupils into a Workhouse.

MR. LYALL.—Would you have a medical inspection, such as they have in the army and navy?—I have merely offered these two suggestions. I am not prepared with any details ; I will not even say which of the suggestions I think the best ; but I am certainly of opinion that the sick poor never will be properly cared for so long as everything is left in the hands of one medical man, whose salary also includes the cost of medicines.

MR. MONCKTON MILNES.—Have you any suggestion to make with a view to an improvement of the condition of what may be called incurable inmates?—I believe I explained very fully, when I was last examined, my opinion upon that subject. I should desire very strongly to enforce the necessity of a paid nurse to superintend the pauper nurses.

Do you think that any portion of the incurable inmates might be advantageously removed from the Workhouse?—That is another suggestion which was made by one of the London Boards of Guardians. I think I mentioned, the last time I was examined, the objection that there is to the crowded state of our Workhouses, and that there was a suggestion whether there might not be another institution to which the worst of the cases might be drafted off.

CHAIRMAN.—Do you mean all incurable cases, or incurable cases of one particular kind?—All incurable cases.

There may be cases in which the disorders are very different, yet all of them incurable. For instance, you have mentioned two or three yourself, as dropsy, cancer, and consumption ; is the proposition that such cases should all be put into one building?—I think that must be regulated entirely by the numbers. I have heard it proposed by one Board of Guardians that, instead of enlarging their Workhouse, there might be a separate institution established more in the suburbs, to which some of their sick cases might be taken, and which might be arranged as a hospital with fit nurses.

Would you class those cases as incurable?—I think that the plan would be to take the worst cases out of the Workhouses, those requiring the greatest comforts and the greatest attention ; but I am not prepared with any details, I merely offer it as a suggestion ; I know that two Boards of Guardians have said that they can do no more than is done for their sick poor in their crowded Work-



houses, and I think they would be very glad to entertain a proposition of the kind referred to ; I cannot say they would desire that there should be a central institution, because I have no means of knowing the numbers ; but if the principle were adopted, then, of course, institutions might be multiplied according to the numbers, so as not to have any one Workhouse overcrowded.

But you have met with an obstacle, have you not, namely, that there would be no available fund for such a purpose, and that Guardians are not ready to increase the rates in order to carry out such a scheme?—I think they would be willing to pay for a separate sick house for those cases which are overflowing the Workhouses at present ; finding that their Workhouses are overcrowded, they naturally consider which would be the best class to draft off ; and it occurs to them that the incurable would be the most desirable class to begin with.

Do you think they would be willing to levy a rate for the purpose of hiring or building a place in the suburbs to which they could draft off incurable cases from the Workhouses?—Yes, on the same principle as the district schools.

I would say once more that I do hope some recommendation may be made about the nurses ; I am strongly of opinion that there should be one responsible and trustworthy nurse in every Workhouse. No one who does not visit them as I do can tell what goes on inside the Workhouses. The nurses will do nothing, in many cases, unless they are paid for it, and if anything is given to a poor person in the Workhouse, it is usual for the nurse, if she is aware of it, to expect that the larger portion will go to her ; in fact, the most helpless receive very little help unless they can pay for it.

MR. LYALL.—How many paid nurses are there generally in the metropolitan Workhouses?—In many there are none at all.

Do they not have one?—I should be very glad if I could state the exact number of London Workhouses in which there are paid nurses. There are none in those which I chiefly visit.